

VZCZCXRO6365
OO RUEHLA
DE RUEHC #0219/01 2630333
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 190329Z SEP 08
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE 9653
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA IMMEDIATE 2513
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA IMMEDIATE 4653
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 8901
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ IMMEDIATE 1092
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 5909
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 5670
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE 3379

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 100219

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/17/2018
TAGS: [OVIP](#) [RICE](#) [CONDOLEEZZA](#) [PREL](#) [PHSA](#) [SP](#) [KV](#) [CU](#)
BL, IS
SUBJECT: Secretary Rice's 09/16/2008 Meeting with
Spanish Ambassador Dezcallar

[1](#)1. (U) Classified by EUR A/S Daniel Fried. Reason
1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)2. (U) September 16, 2008; 11 a.m.; Secretary's Office.

[1](#)3. (U) Participants:

U.S.
The Secretary
EUR A/DAS Nerissa Cook
EUR/WE Stacie Zerdecki (Notetaker)

Spain
Ambassador Jorge Dezcallar
DCM Jose Pascual Marco

[1](#)4. (C) SUMMARY. Recently arrived Spanish Ambassador
Jorge Dezcallar made a courtesy call on Secretary Rice
to discuss the bilateral relationship. Dezcallar opened
by saying he was asked to personally deliver a message
from the King of Spain of his desire to improve
relations. They discussed their shared concern over
recent developments in Bolivia and Venezuela, the need
for real change in Cuba under Raul Castro, Moratinos'
positive role in the Middle East, and differences over
Kosovo. Dezcallar closed by requesting the Secretary's
support for Spain's 2010 candidacy in the Human Rights
Council. The Secretary wished Spain luck and commented
on Spain's strong human rights record, but admitted that
the U.S. is not active in the Council and doesn't view
it as a functioning organization. END SUMMARY.

Bilateral Relationship

[1](#)5. (SBU) Ambassador Dezcallar expressed his intention
"to work very hard to improve relations during his
tenure" as ambassador to the United States. He relayed
to the Secretary that he had spoken to both the King of
Spain and Foreign Minister Moratinos in the past two
days and both expressed their wish to strengthen the
bilateral relationship. Both the Secretary and
Dezcallar agreed that relations are good between the two
countries, but there is room for improvement.

Bolivia and Venezuela

[1](#)6. (C) Almost immediately, the conversation turned to
recent events in Venezuela and Bolivia. Dezcallar and
the Secretary agreed that while both situations are

domestic problems, they are developing into crises of international concern. The Secretary noted that while she sympathizes with the Bolivian people, the Bolivian regime is making it very difficult for the United States to help them. Dezcallar agreed that the Bolivian people are suffering, and that resolution is "through consultation, not violence." Both agreed that Bolivian President Morales is "out of his league" in his attempts to govern the country.

¶17. (C) On Venezuela, Ambassador Dezcallar recounted how he was forced to wait three hours for a meeting with Chavez several years ago, then heard mindless chatter from Chavez for a few hours before being allowed to make his official request for Venezuela to turn over 6 ETA members wanted for killing 36 Spaniards. When Dezcallar was finally able to make his appeal, Chavez readily agreed. Only when Dezcallar got out of the meeting did he learn that Chavez stalled for enough time to let the ETA members escape from detention. The Secretary responded that the United States has found that ignoring Chavez is the best policy, and the lack of attention frustrates him more than admonition.

Cuba

STATE 00100219 002 OF 002

¶18. (C) The Secretary stated she remains unconvinced of the sincerity of minor post-Fidel changes in Cuba. She emphasized the need to make real change, as opposed to cosmetic ones. For example, Cubans should have access to cell phones and the Internet. The Ambassador countered that GoS doesn't think that changes in Cuba since Raul's ascent to power have been cosmetic. He denied that Raul is another Fidel, but warned against being too heavy-handed and "scaring him off, or he will be even more difficult."

¶19. (U) Dezcallar commented that Cuba is going through hard times this hurricane season, and the Secretary confirmed that the United States has already offered humanitarian aid.

Kosovo

¶10. (C) Turning to Europe, the Secretary asked if there was any chance Spain would recognize Kosovo. Dezcallar demurred "not any time soon." The Secretary replied that she hoped Spain would not recognize the breakaway Georgian provinces of South Ossetia or Abkhazia, and Dezcallar assured her they would not.

Middle East Peace

¶11. (C) The Secretary and Ambassador Dezcallar briefly discussed the Israeli/Palestinian peace process and Foreign Minister Moratinos' whirlwind trip through the region September 12-17. Secretary Rice said that Moratinos has been helpful in the Middle East, and made reference to her trilateral meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Livni and the head of the Palestinian negotiating team, Abu Alaa, on August 26, 2008. The Secretary and Dezcallar agreed that the situation was not all bad and noted that Palestinian forces are taking on more responsibility.

Human Rights Council

¶12. (C) Mirroring FM Moratinos' request to the

Secretary during their May 19 meeting, Ambassador
Dezcallar again asked for the United States' support of
Spanish candidacy to the Human Rights Council in the
next election (2010). Similar to her response then, the
Secretary said the U.S. may not vote at all, as she
considers the council a "disaster." However, she noted
that the council needed countries with good human rights
records, like Spain, to hold seats.
RICE